

Amendments to the Drawings

The replacement sheet in the Appendix includes changes to Figure 4. In Figure 4, the previously omitted text has been added.

Remarks

A substitute specification accompanies this response. No new matter has been entered in the substitute specification. A marked-up copy of the original specification also accompanies this response showing the changes thereto.

The title, drawings, and abstract have been amended to make editorial changes therein, bearing in mind the criticisms in the Official Action.

The Official Action objects to the specification under §112, first paragraph. The specification has been amended without adding new matter and reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to the specification is respectfully requested.

The claims were rejected under §112, first and second paragraphs and claim 9 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101. The original claims have been replaced with new claims 10-11 that avoid these rejections. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 6, and 9 were rejected as unpatentable over WELCH et al. 5,903,373 in view of MIZUTA et al. 5,737,335. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested in view of the new claims.

New claims 10 and 11 define a method and corresponding system with plural controlling devices controlling plural controlled devices. The new claims are distinguishable from

WELCH et al. and MIZUTA et al. in that two wait times are set (wait times 1 and 2 in the specification - e.g., Figures 3, 5, and 8); a first wait time between receipt of an end of a steering information signal and receipt of a beginning of an immediately following synchronization signal, and a second wait time between receipt of an end of a start signal and receipt of beginning of the steering information signal, where a length of the second wait time identifies the respective controlled device. The proposed combination does not disclose these two wait times. MIZUTA et al. disclose time slots, but this amounts to only one of the two wait times. There is no suggestion in the combination to include the two wait times claimed.

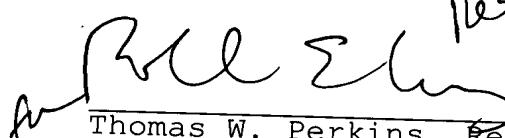
Further, the combination does not disclose or suggest that in each of the controlling devices, when the synchronization signal is not received in the first time period, transmitting the infrared signal with, in order, the synchronization signal, the start signal, the time delay, and the steering information signal, and when the synchronization signal is received in the first time period, transmitting the infrared signal without the synchronization signal but with, in order, the start signal, the time delay, and the steering information signal. This is missing from both references and would not be obvious to one of skill in the art.

In view of the present amendment and the foregoing remarks, it is believed that the present application has been placed in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

Respectfully submitted,

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TWP/mjr

Appendix

- a substitute specification,
- a marked-up version of the substitute specification showing the changes,
- a new Abstract, and
- one replacement drawing sheet with changes to Figure 4.